This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

**Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

**About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

E
278
A5
D4

A 400453

# CENTENNIAL OF THE CAPTURE

OF

# MAJOR ANDRÉ.

## ORATION AT TARRYTOWN,

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23d, 1880.

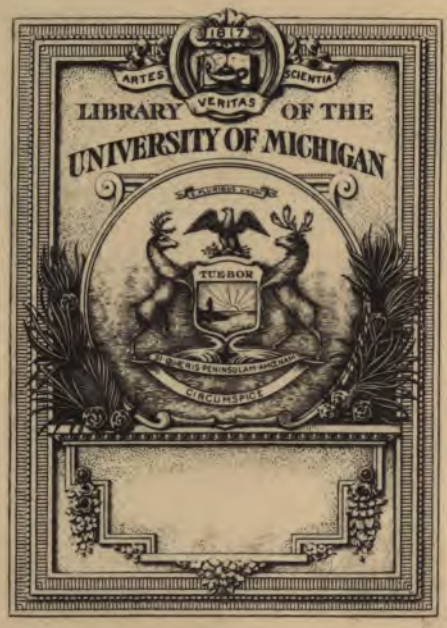
BY

HON. CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW.

Entered ... May 18 1905 NO 1

NEW YORK:
JOHN POLHEMUS, PRINTER, 102 NASSAU STREET.

1880.




THE GIFT OF
Grand Rapids Public
Library

(2)

# CENTENNIAL OF THE CAPTURE

OF

# MAJOR ANDRÉ.

---

## Oration at Tarrytown,

## *SEPTEMBER 23d, 1880.*

BY

Hon. CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW.

---

NEW YORK:
JOHN POLHEMUS, PRINTER, 102 NASSAU STREET.

1880.

E
.S7S
.A5
D4

Town Rapids Public Lib
1-9-90

# CENTENNIAL OF THE CAPTURE

OF

# MAJOR ANDRÉ.

One hundred years ago the sun rose upon the same beautiful landscape which surrounds us here to-day. The noble Hudson rolled in front; to the north were the Highlands, in their majesty and strength; on the west towered the mountains enclosing the Bay, and on the east spread valleys and hills celebrated then, as now, for their picturesqueness and commanding views. Beyond the loveliness of the situation it had no greater claims upon the attention of the world than hundreds of places adorned by nature which have made our State celebrated for the beauty and variety of its scenery. But when the sun went down this spot had become one of the fields priceless in the memory of mankind, where virtue is vindicated, and civilization and liberty saved from great disaster. The story we repeat here has as much value as a lesson to the living as a reverent tribute to the memory of the dead.

History, traditions, legends forgotten, almost lost, in the rapid march of events, and the wonderful development of material prosperity, are so revived by these commemorations that our county, richer than any other in the commonwealth in revolutionary recollections, becomes in every part a perpetual teacher of the labors and sacrifices of patriotism to secure our independence.

The happiness and progress of mankind have as often been advanced or retarded by small events as by great battles. If the three hundred men with Leonidas stemmed the Persian torrent, and made Thermopylæ the inspiration of twenty centuries, right here a century ago to-day three plain farmers of Westchester preserved the liberties of the American people.

It is hard, even in imagination, to understand now the condition of this region at that period. It was ominously known as the neutral ground, and marauded and harried by Royal and Continental soldiers, and by Skinners and Cow-boys, robbers and brigands of equal infamy. The Whig farmer saw his cattle driven off and the flames of his buildings lighting the sky to-night, and mercilessly retaliated upon his Tory neighbor to-morrow. Fences were down, fruit rotted ungathered on the ground, rank vegetation covered the unsown fields, and the gaunt and vengeful citizen guarded with ready musket his family and hidden stores, or watched in ambuscade by the wayside to recapture his stolen property or prevent the

delivery of foraged stores to the enemy. Amidst such experiences and surroundings the captors of André passed their daily lives.

September, 1780, was a gloomy and anxious time for Washington and Congress. Charleston had fallen, and Gates had been disastrously defeated. With the rout of his army the whole South had come under the enemy's control. New Jersey was overrun, and twenty thousand men, veterans of European battle-fields, were gathered in New York. The French fleet had sailed away, and a large reinforcement arrived to the British navy, and Washington's cherished plan of a demonstration against the city had to be abandoned. The only American force worthy the name of an army, numbering less than twelve thousand, suffering from long arrears of pay, without money to send their starving families, and short of every kind of supplies, was encamped at and about West Point. This critical moment was selected by Arnold, with devilish sagacity, to strike his deadly blow. Elated by the successes which had crowned his earlier efforts, he plunged into excesses, which left him without a command, bankrupt in fortune, and smarting under the reprimand of Congress. He still retained the confidence of Washington, and anxious to secure the largest price for his treason applied for and obtained the command of West Point.

The surrender of this post, controlling the passes of the Hudson, with its war materials vital to the maintain-

ance of the patriot army, and its garrison of four thousand troops, together with the person of Washington, ended, in his judgment, the war, and gave him a place second to Monk in English history.

The success or failure of the united colonies in forming an independent government depended, from the beginning to the end of the contest, on the State of New York.

Through her boundaries ran the natural channels by which the Six Nations marched to Savage Empire ; the English broke the French power on this continent, and emigration and commerce have peopled and enriched great states. A British statesman and soldier said : "Fortify from Canada to the City of New York, and we can hold the colonies together." The British Cabinet and Generals said : "Capture and place a chain of posts along the route from New York City to Canada, and we can crush rebellious New England and awe all the rest into submission." The battle of Saratoga and surrender of Burgoyne defeated the last and most formidable attempt to accomplish this result by arms. Upon its bloody field American Independence was consummated. That grand victory which gave us unity at home and recognition abroad was largely due to the skill, the dash, the intrepid valor of Arnold.

The issue decided in that conflict the control of the passes of the Hudson, and all which would follow was now to be reopened and reversed by treason, and the traitor the same Arnold. For eighteen months a correspondence

opened by Arnold had been carried on between him and Major André, acting for Sir Henry Clinton.

He wrote over the signature of Gustavus, seeking a bid for his defection, and occasionally imparting valuable information to indicate his importance. André replied under the name of John Anderson, testing and tempting.

These letters, moulded in the vocabulary of trade, and treating of the barter and sale of cattle and goods, were really haggling about the price of the betrayal of the liberties of America and a human soul. The time had come for action, and the British must be satisfied as to the identity of their man and the firmness of his purpose, and commit him beyond the possibility of retreat. For said Sir Henry Clinton, "We propose to risk no lives upon the possibilities of deceit or failure." The first meeting appointed at Dobbs Ferry, on the 12th of September, failed, and Arnold came near being captured. With rare audacity he reported his visit at once to Washington, and the next day wrote a letter to General Greene expressing bitter indignation against Gates for his Southern defeat, and the apprehension that it would leave an indelible stain upon his reputation.

Armed with a decoy letter from Beverly Robinson, ostensibly about his confiscated lands, really conveying information where an interview with André might be had, he met Washington, on his way to see Rochambeau at Hartford, carried him across the river at Verplancks Point

in his barge, and asked permission to go, but the chief declined, saying the matter had better be left to the civil authorities. An overruling Providence was protecting the patriot cause and weaving about the plot the elements of its exposure and destruction. Baffled, but not disheartened, Arnold, lurking in the bushes of the Long Clove below Haverstraw, sent a boat at midnight to the Vulture to bring André to the shore. The boatmen, roughly handled on the sloop of war for daring to approach her without a flag of truce, are hurried before André and explain their mission. He disguised his uniform in a cloak and determined to accompany them. The caution of Sir Henry Clinton—not to go within the American lines, not to cover his uniform, not to be the bearer of any papers—rings in his ears. The warning hand of Beverly Robinson rests upon his shoulder. The danger, the disgrace, the prize, are before him. If detected, a spy; if successful, at the head of a victorious column upon Fort Putnam receiving the surrender of West Point: a General's Commission; the thanks of Parliament; the knightly honors of his King. Brilliant, accomplished, captivating, chivalric and ambitious, his secret correspondence had revealed the defect in his character; his moral sense was paralyzed in the presence of great opportunities.

The dawn finds Arnold and André still in the thicket, still disputing about the terms. Horses are hastily mounted and they start for Smith's House, still standing yonder above the bay.

The sentinel's challenge, the countersign, warn André that he is in the last position of a soldier: disguised and on a secret mission within the enemy's camp. All the morning that fearful bargaining goes on, and at last it is settled. He receives the papers giving the plans, fortifications, armament and troops at West Point, the proceedings of Washington's last council of war, and hides them between his stockings and his feet. He receives the assurance that the defences shall be so manned as to fall without a blow, and assures Arnold in return of a Brigadier-Generalship in the British army, and seven thousand pounds in money, and bids him farewell, till he meets him at the close of a sham combat to receive his surrender and sword.

Those two men thus bidding adieu on yonder hillside have determined the destinies of unborn millions, and none share their secret, and there is no one to betray them. Once safely back with those papers, and America's doom is sealed. We bow with devout and humble thanksgiving to the watchful and beneficent Providence which turned most trivial circumstances into the powerful elements which thwarted this well-laid scheme. Colonel Livingston, commanding at Verplancks, refused by Arnold a heavy gun to fire upon the Vulture, had made it so hot for her with a little four-pounder on Teller's Point, that she had dropped down the river. The timid Smith, of whom posterity is in doubt whether he was a knave or a tool, was too scared to venture to reach

her by boat, and so the land journey was determined upon. Still further disguised, and armed with Arnold's pass in the name of John Anderson, André crossed the river on the afternoon of the 22d of September to Verplancks Point, and safely passed through Livingston's camp.

Gaily he rides, accompanied by Smith, through the Cortlandt woods, and over the Yorktown hills. He laughs as he passes the ancient guide-post, bearing its legend, "*Dishe his di Roode toe de Kshings Farray*," and his hair stood on end, he said, when he met Colonel Webb, of our army, whom he perfectly knew, but who stared and went on. His plan is to strike the White Plains road and so reach his own lines. But at Crumpond, Captain Boyd stops them. A most uncomfortable, inquisitive, vigilant, and troublesome Yankee, is this same Captain Boyd. Arnold's pass stuns him, but it requires all the versatility and adroitness of André to allay his suspicions. He so significantly recommends their remaining all night that they dare not decline. A Westchester farmer's bed never had two more uneasy occupants.

At early dawn they departed, with Captain Boyd in the rear, and the Cow-boys, against whom Boyd had warned them, in front—André's spirits rose. He had left disgrace and a shameful death behind, and saw only escape, glory and renown before. Hitherto taciturn and depressed, he now overwhelmed his dazed companions with a flood of brilliant talk.

Poetry, music, belles lettres, the drama, the times, formed the theme of his flowing eloquence, and ever and anon as they rose the many eminences which command a view of the Highlands, and the river, he broke out in rapturous praise of the entrancing scenery. Mrs. Underhill, near Pine's Bridge, had lost her all, but one cow and a bag of meal, by a raid of the Cow-boys the night before, but with true county hospitality she spread before them the time-honored Westchester dish of suppawn and milk. At Pine's Bridge, Smith's courage failed and he bade his companion good-bye. This was another of the trivial incidents which led André to his fate. Smith, with his acquaintance and ready wit, would have piloted him safely by the White Plains road, or upon the other route, and satisfied the scruples of the yeomen who captured him. Smith rode to West Point and by his report allayed Arnold's anxiety, and then in the easy and shiftless character of everybody's friend he continued on to Fishkill and supped with Washington and his staff. André alone, free from care, decided to strike for the river—it was a shorter road—and from the Cow-boys who infested it he had nothing to fear; but it was another link in the chain winding about him. The broad domains of his friends, the great loyalist families, lay about him, his own lines a few short hours beyond.

Saturday morning, the 23d of September, one hundred years ago, was one of those clear, bright, exhilarating days,

when this region is in the fullness of its quiet beauty. The handsome horseman delights the children of Staats Hammond's family as they hand him a cup of water, and leaves a lasting impression upon the Quakers of Chappaqua, of whom he inquires the distance to Tarrytown. Through Sparta, he strikes the river road, and gallops along that most picturesque highway, the scenery in harmony with the brilliant future spread before his imagination. He recognizes the old Sleepy Hollow Church, with its ancient bell bearing the motto, *Si Deus pro nobis, quis contra nos*, and a half mile in front sees the bridge over the little brook which was to be for him a fatal Rubicon On the south side of that stream, in the bushes playing cards, were three young farmers of the neighborhood—John Paulding, David Williams and Isaac Van Wart—watching to intercept the Cow-boys and their stolen cattle. At the approach of the horseman, Paulding steps into the road, presents his musket and calls a halt. It was nine in the morning; they have been there but an hour. An earlier start, a swifter pace, and André would have escaped; but this was still another of the trivial incidents in the fatal combination about him André speaks first. "My lads, I hope you belong to our party." "Which party," they said. "The lower party," he answered. "We do." "Then thank God," said he, "I am once more among friends. I am a British officer, out on particular business, and must not be detained a minute." Then they said, "We are Americans, and you are our prisoner

and must dismount." "My God," he said, laughing, "a man must do anything to get along," and presented Arnold's pass. Had he presented it first, Paulding said, afterwards, he would have let him go. They carefully scanned it, but persisted in detaining him. He threatened them with Arnold's vengeance for this disrespect to his order; but, in language more forcible than polite, they told him "they cared not for that," and led him to the great whitewood tree, under which he was searched. As the fatal papers fell from his feet, Paulding said, "My God, here it is," and, as he read them, shouted in high excitement to his companions, "By God, he is a spy."

Now came the crucial and critical moment. André, fully alive to his danger, and with every faculty alert, felt no alarm. He had the day before bargained with and successfully bought an American Major-General of the highest military reputation.

If a few thousand pounds and a commission in the British army could seduce the commander of a district, surely escape was easy from these three young men, but one of whom could read, and who were buttressed by neither fame nor fortune. "If you will release me," said André, "I will give you a hundred guineas and any amount of dry goods." "I will give you a thousand guineas," he cried, "and you can hold me hostage till one of your number returns with the money."

Then Paulding swore, "We would not let you go for

ten thousand guineas." That decision saved the liberties of America. It voiced the spirit which sustained and carried through the revolutionary struggle for nationality, and crushed the rebellion waged eighty years afterwards to destroy that nationality—the invincible courage and impregnable virtue of the common people.

As Washington was riding that night from Hartford, depressed by the refusal of Count Rochambeau, the French General, to co-operate in his plans, and to be overwhelmed on the morrow by Arnold's astounding treason, all along the route enthusiastic throngs with torches and acclamations hailed his approach. "We may be beaten by the English," he said to Rochambeau's Aid, "it is the fortune of war; but behold an army which they can never conquer."

With one of his captors in front, the others on either side of his horse, André is carried to Colonel Jameson's, the nearest American post. The gay horseman has come to grief, and the buoyant gallop to the front has turned into a funeral march to the rear, and he recalls the ill omen of the song sung by Wolfe the night before the storming of Quebec, and which he had repeated at the farewell dinner given him the evening of his departure on this fatal errand.

> Why, soldiers, why,
> Should we be melancholy boys,
> Why, soldiers, why,
> Whose business 'tis to die.

Jameson, a brave and honest soldier, was easily duped

by the courtly arts of André. While he sent the papers by special messenger to Washington, he was persuaded by André to forward him with a letter descriptive of his capture to Arnold. Once there and both had escaped. The vigilant and suspicious Major Tallmadge induced Jameson to bring back André; but to recall the letter to Arnold, he positively refused. Jameson's messenger to Washington, mistaking his road, did not reach West Point till the next noon; his messenger to Arnold arrived in the morning.

Washington, on approaching the river, according to his habit, proceeded at once to examine the fortifications. La Fayette reminded him that Mrs. Arnold's breakfast was waiting. "You young gentleman are all in love with Mrs. Arnold," he said. "You go and tell her not to wait for me, I will be there in a short time." Hamilton and McHenry delivered the message, and were welcomed by Arnold and his wife.

In the midst of the meal Allan, the messenger, delivered Jameson's letter. Arnold's iron nerve held him unconcernedly at the table a few moments; then, saying he must go over to the Point to prepare for the reception of the General, he arose.

His wife followed him up stairs. Hastily informing her of his ruin and bidding her perhaps a last farewell, as she fell fainting to the floor, he kissed his sleeping baby, stepped a moment into the breakfast room to inform his

guests of the sudden illness of his wife, and, followed by his boat's crew, dashed down the hillside to the river.

They must row with all their might, he told them, as he had a message to deliver on board the Vulture, eighteen miles below, for Washington, and should be back before evening. He reprimed his pistols, and, with one in each hand, sat resolved to die the death of a suicide rather than be captured. By promises of reward, by voice and gesture, he urges his crew to their best exertions. His guilty soul peopling every turn of the river with avenging pursuit, he sails through the Highlands, waving his handkerchief as a flag to his forts, redoubts and patrols, astonishing the vigilant Livingston at Verplancks with the spectacle of his commander making straight for the British sloop of war, and takes the first free breath of relief as he steps on the deck of the Vulture.

To his coxswain he offers a commission, to the crew rewards, if they will desert and join the British. They unanimously refuse, and Larvey the coxswain replies: "If General Arnold likes the King of England, let him serve him; we love our country, and intend to live or die in support of her cause." At Arnold's command they are made prisoners, and he stood there among them then, as he stands pilloried in history for all time, the only American soldier who, during the revolutionary war, turned traitor to his country. As Washington returns from the inspection at West Point, to Arnold's headquarters, at the Robinson

House, he finds Hamilton, holding Jameson's letters and the papers found on André. Then he understands Arnold's sudden flight, the failure to greet him from the batteries with the accustomed salute, the general negligence and want of preparation for attack everywhere found. He stands on a mine. How far does this conspiracy extend? Who else are implicated? The enemy may come this very night, and who shall be placed in posts of danger? Despairingly he says: "Whom can we trust now?"

But Washington's greatness shone conspicuously in great emergencies. Hamilton is dispatched to intercept Arnold, if possible, Tallmadge is ordered to bring André with triple guards to West Point, Greene at Tappan is directed to put the whole army in marching order, and before night every fort and defence from Putnam to Verplancks is ready for any assault. Then, with no outward sign of excitement, Washington sat down to dinner, and with courtly kindness sent word to Arnold's hysterical and screaming wife: "It was my duty to arrest General Arnold, and I have used every exertion to do so, but I take pleasure in informing *you* that he is now safe on board the Vulture." André was brought to West Point that night, and taken to the head-quarters of the army at Tappan the next day. According to the laws and usages of war in relation to spies, Washington could have ordered him summarily to execution. But threats of retaliation, impudent letters from Arnold, extraordinary appeals and interpretations of André's conduct and position from Sir Henry Clinton, began to pour in upon the Commander-in-Chief. He ordered a board of officers to be convened, and submitted the case to their

consideration. It was as august a tribunal as ever sat under like circumstances: six major-generals and eight brigadiers—as eminent as any in the service, including the foreign officers La Fayette and Steuben—formed the Court. They gave André every opportunity to present his own defence, and when the facts were all in, unanimously adjudged him guilty, and that he must suffer the death of a spy. His youth, graces and accomplishments, his dignity and cheerfulness, won the affections of his guard and the tenderest sympathy of the whole army. There was not a soldier present who would not have risked his life, if by so doing Arnold might be captured and substituted in André's place. In all the glittering splendor of the full uniform and ornaments of his rank, in the presence of the whole American army, without the quiver of a muscle or sign of fear, the officers about him weeping, the bands playing the dead march, he walked to execution. His last words were of loving solicitude for the welfare of mother and sisters in distant Britain, and the manner of fame he would leave behind. "How hard is my fate, but it will be but a momentary pang," he said, as he pushed aside the executioner and himself adjusted the rope. To those around he cried: "I pray you to bear witness that I meet my fate like a brave man," and swung into eternity.

The supernatural served to add to the interest and perpetuate the memory of this tragedy. On the day of his execution the great tree under which he was searched was shattered by a bolt of lightning; and at the same hour, at his home in England, his sister awoke from a troubled sleep screaming, "My brother is dead; he has been hung as a spy."

In the British Army, and in England, the wildest indignation burst out against Washington. André was mourned and honored as if he had fallen in a moment of glorious victory at the head of his column. His brother was knighted, his family pensioned, and his King declared in solemn message that "the public can never be compensated for the vast advantages which must have followed from the success of his plan." In Westminster Abbey, that grand mausoleum of England's mighty dead, where repose her greatest statesmen, warriors and authors, the King placed a monument bearing this inscription: "Sacred to the memory of Major John André, who, raised by his merit, at an early period of his life, to the rank of Adjutant-General of the British forces in America, and employed in an important but hazardous enterprise, fell a sacrifice to his zeal for his King and country."

Forty years afterwards a Royal embassy came to this country, disinterred his remains at Tappan, and a British frigate sent for the purpose bore them to England, where they were buried beside his monument with imposing ceremonies. One of the most enlightened and liberal of England's churchmen, in a recent visit to this land, wrote the inscription for, and urged the erection of, the monument to André's memory at Tappan, as the one act which would do more than anything else to remove the last vestiges of enmity between the United States and Great Britain.

André's story is the one overmastering romance of the revolution. American and English literature are full of eloquence and poetry in tribute to his memory and sympathy for his fate. After the lapse of a hundred years there is no abatement of absorbing interest. What had this young man done to merit immortality? The mission, whose tragic issue lifted him out of the oblivion of other minor British officers, in its inception was free from peril or daring, and its objects and purposes were utterly infamous. Had he succeeded by the desecration of the honorable uses of passes and flags of truce, his name would have been held in everlasting execration. In his failure, the infant Republic escaped the dagger with which he was feeling for its heart, and the crime was drowned in tears for his untimely end. His youth and beauty, his skill with pen and pencil, his effervescing spirits and magnetic disposition, the brightness of his life, the calm courage in the gloom of his death, his early love and disappointment, and the image of his lost Honora hid in his mouth when captured in Canada, with the exclamation, "That saved, I care not for the loss of all the rest," and nestling in his bosom when he was slain, surrounded him with a halo of poetry and pity which have secured for him what he most sought and could never have won in battles and sieges—a fame and recognition which have outlived that of all the generals under whom he served.

Are Kings only grateful, and do Republics forget? Is

fame a travesty, and the judgment of mankind a farce? America had a parallel case in Captain Nathan Hale. Of the same age as André, he graduated at Yale College with high honors, enlisted in the patriot cause at the beginning of the contest, and secured the love and confidence of all about him. When none else would go upon a most important and perilous mission, he volunteered, and was captured by the British. While André received every kindness, courtesy and attention, and was fed from Washington's table, Hale was thrust into a noisome dungeon in the sugar-house. While André was tried by a board of officers, and had ample time and every facility for defence, Hale was summarily ordered to execution the next morning. While André's last wishes and bequests were sacredly followed, the infamous Cunningham tore from Hale his cherished Bible, and destroyed before his eyes his last letters to his mother and sister, and asked him what he had to say. "All I have to say," was Hale's reply, "I regret I have but one life to lose for my country." His death was concealed for months, because Cunningham said he did not want the rebels to know they had a man who could die so bravely. And yet, while André rests in that grandest of mausoleums, where the proudest of nations garners the remains and perpetuates the memories of its most eminent and honored children, the name and deeds of Nathan Hale have passed into oblivion, and only a simple tomb in a village church-yard marks his resting-place. The dying decla-

rations of André and Hale express the animating spirit of their several armies, and teach why, with all her power, England could not conquer America. "I call upon you to witness that I die like a brave man," said André, and he spoke from British and Hessian surroundings, seeking only glory and pay. "I regret I have but one life to lose for my country," said Hale; and with him and his comrades self was forgotten in that absorbing, passionate patriotism which pledges fortune, honor and life to the sacred cause.

But Republics are not ungrateful. The captors of André were honored and rewarded in their lives, and grateful generations celebrate their deeds and revere their memories. Washington wrote to Congress: "The party that took Major André acted in such a manner as does them the highest honor, and proves them to be men of great virtue; their conduct gives them a just claim to the thanks of their country." Congress acted promptly. It thanked them by resolution, granted to each an annuity of two hundred dollars for life, and twelve hundred and fifty dollars in cash, or the same amount in confiscated lands in Westchester County, and directed a silver medal bearing the motto "Fidelity" on the one side and "Vincit Amor Patriæ" on the other, to be presented to them. The Legislature of the State of New York gave to each of them a farm in consideration—reads the act—of "their virtue in refusing a large sum offered to them by Major André as a bribe to permit him to escape." Shortly after, Washington gave a grand dinner party at

Verplancks Point. At the table were his staff and the famous generals of the army, and as honored guests these three young men—Paulding, Williams and Van Wart—whose names were now household words all over the land; and there with solemn and impressive speech Washington presented the medals. Paulding died in 1818, and in 1827 the Corporation of the City of New York placed a monument over his grave in the old cemetery just north of Peekskill, reciting, "The Corporation of the City of New York erected this Tomb as a Memorial Sacred to Public Gratitude," the Mayor delivering the address and a vast concourse participating in the ceremonies. Van Wart died in 1828, and in the Greenburgh church-yard the citizens of this county erected a memorial in "Testimony of his virtuous and patriotic conduct." Williams died in Livingstonville, in Schoharie County, in 1831, and was buried with military honors. In 1876 the State erected a monument, and his remains were re-interred in the old stone fort at Schoharie Court House. On the spot where André was captured the young men of Westchester County, in 1853, built a cenotaph in honor of his captors. Arnold, burned in effigy in every village and hamlet in America, received his money and a commission in the British army, but was daily insulted by the proud and honorable officers upon whom his association was forced, and who despised alike the treason and the traitor. His infamy has served to gild

and gloss the acts of André, and deepening with succeeding years brings out with each generation a clearer and purer appreciation of the virtue and patriotism of Paulding, Williams and Van Wart.

Pity for André led to grave injustice to Washington and detraction of his captors, which a century has not effaced. Sir Henry Clinton and his officers, in addresses and memoirs, denounced the execution of André as without justification. A contemporary British poetess characterized Washington as a "remorseless murderer," and one of the latest and ablest of England's historians says this act is the one indelible "blot upon his character," and that the decision of the military tribunal composed of men ignorant of Vattel and Puffendorff, and fresh from "plough handles and shop boards," does not relieve him. It has become a conviction abroad, and to some extent a sentiment here, that a grave and fatal error was committed. It is claimed that André was under the protection of a flag of truce, that he was within the American lines upon the invitation of the commander of the district, and under the protection of that General's pass, that his intent was free from turpitude, and the circumstances surrounding his position entitled him to exchange or discharge. When André was on trial upon the charge of being a spy, he testified in his own behalf that "he had no reason to suppose he came on shore under a flag of truce," and such is the concurrent testimony of all the witnesses. The story was the subsequent invention of

Arnold. But even if true, the flag is recognized in the usages of war for definite and honorable purposes—it ameliorates the horrors of the conflict; but, when used as a cover for treasonable purposes, loses its character and protective power. To present it as a defence and shield for the corrupt correspondence of the enemy's emissary and a traitorous officer, is a monstrous perversion. It is true, he was present at Arnold's invitation and carried his pass, but he knew the object of his visit, and did not hold the pass in his own name and title. Months before he had written to Colonel Sheldon, commanding the Continental outposts, that under flag and pass he proposed visiting, on important business, General Arnold, at West Point, and requesting safe conduct, and signing and representing himself as John Anderson, a trader. The meeting which finally took place was an appointment often before thwarted, and its object to tamper with the integrity and seduce from his allegiance the enemy's officer. The signals and agencies of communication and travel between hostile forces were collusively used to procure the betrayal of an army and the ruin of a nation. André landed at Haverstraw to traffic with the necessities and tempt the irritated pride of a bankrupt and offended general, and having succeeded in seducing him to surrender the forts and trusts under his command, Benedict Arnold, so far as his confederate André was concerned, ceased from that moment to be the American commander, and any papers issued by him to further

and conceal the scheme were absolutely void. His pass and safe conduct were not only vitiated in their inception by the joint act of giver and receiver, secreting treason in them, but they were issued to an assumed name and borne in a false character. A British soldier found disguised in the American lines, with the plans of the patriots' forts, the details of their armaments and the outlines of the plot for their betrayal hidden in his boots, lost, with the discovery of his personality and purposes, the protection of a fraudulent certificate. Greene and Knox, and La Fayette and Steuben, and the other members of the board of officers who tried and convicted André, may possibly have been ignorant of the great authorities upon international law; but had they studied, they would have found in them both precedent and justification. While the laws of war justify tampering with the opposing commander and compassing his desertion, the sudden, unsuspected, unguardable and overwhelming character of the blow render it the highest of crimes, and subjects those detected and arrested in the act to summary execution. A general is commissioned by his government to fight its battles and protect its interests. The law of principal and agent is as applicable as to a civil transaction, and all who deal with him, to betray his trust, know that he is acting beyond the limits of his authority. Not the least remarkable of the incidents of this strange history, was the proposition of Sir Henry Clinton to submit the question to the arbitration

of the French General Rochambeau and the Hessian General Knyphausen. Such an offer would never have been made to a European commander. It was an expression in a form most offensive to Washington, of that supercilious contempt for the abilities, acquirements and opinions of American soldiers and statesmen, on the part of the ruling classes in England, which precipitated the Revolution and created this Republic. The sympathy and grief of Washington for André and his misfortunes were among the deepest and profoundest emotions of his life. The most urgent public necessity, the most solemn of public duties demanded his decision. The country and the army were dismayed by the plot, which Congress declared would have been ruinous to the cause, which Greene proclaimed in general order would have been a fatal stab at our liberties, which King George the Third said possessed advantages that, if successful, could not be estimated, and as Sir Henry Clinton wrote, would have ended the conflict. Washington's remark to La Fayette, "Whom can we trust now," echoed the sentiment of the hour. In that supreme moment private considerations and personal pity surrendered to the requirements of official responsibility, and General Washington, the Commander-in-chief, stamped out treasonable sentiment within, and deterred treasonable efforts without, by signing the death warrant of Major John André.

André left as a legacy a blow at his captors, which, thirty-

seven years afterwards, bore extraordinary fruit. In 1817 one of them petitioned Congress for an increase of pension, and Major Tallmadge, then a member, assailed them with great vigor and virulence. He had been a distinguished officer in the Revolutionary war. It was by his energy and sagacity that Lt.-Col. Jameson was prevented delivering André to Arnold, and he was in command of the guard and with André till his death. Like all the young American officers about him, Tallmadge formed a warm friendship for him, and admiration of his character and accomplishments. He asserted that his captors were Cow-boys, and that it was André's opinion, frequently expressed, that they stopped him for plunder, and would have released him if he could have given security for his ransom. Tallmadge knew nothing of either of them prior to this event, and his judgment was wholly the reflex of André's expressions. André's remarks were either a deliberate stab at the reputations of the men towards whom the nation's gratitude was already rising with a volume which promised an immortality of fame, while he was waiting a shameful death, or in his dread extremity he could neither understand any higher motive in them to resist his offers, or regard with tolerance or patience these humble peasants whose acts had ruined his fortunes and delivered him to his fate. But against assertions and theories stand the impregnable facts of history. They did reject bribes beyond the wildest dreams of any wealth they ever hoped to accumulate. They did

deliver him to the nearest American post, and neither asked or expected any reward. Van Wart had served four years in the Westchester Militia, and his term of enlistment had but recently expired. Paulding had been twice a British prisoner of war in New York, and was a third time wounded in their hands at the declaration of peace, and the Yager uniform in which he had escaped but four days before the capture misled André into the impulsive revelation of his rank. Security for the ransom they had. As they were intelligent enough to understand the importance of their prisoner, they knew that while two held him as hostage, the third could arrange for the delivery of any sum he promised upon his release.

Washington, the Continental Congress and the Legislature of our own State are the contemporary witnesses, and their testimonies by words and deeds are part of the record which makes this day memorable. When the news of Major Tallmadge's charges was received here, sixteen of the most respected and reputable men of our County, names as familiar among us as household words, certified to Congress, "that during the revolutionary war they were well acquainted with Isaac Van Wart, David Williams and John Paulding, and that at no time during the revolutionary war was any suspicion entertained by their neighbors or acquaintances that they or either of them held any undue intercourse with the enemy. On the contrary, they were universally esteemed, and taken to be ardent and